



October 24, 2017

Dear Representatives:

House Bills 5096 - 5099 seek to amend various local government statutes and the County Road Law in a way that would significantly reduce local governments' and county road agencies' abilities to charge adequate fees, provide safe and reasonable criteria to access public jurisdictions, and collect adequate bonding should these properties be damaged and need restoration from telecommunication providers and their contractors (hardware telecom providers) that wish to work install and maintain cable, fiber-optics, extended poles/antennas, towers and power units on public properties.

In effect, this would force local government, county road agencies and public works departments to subsidize telecommunications with local and Michigan Transportation Funds. We oppose HB 5096 - 5099 for these reasons:

- As legal guardians of the public property and road ROW, local government and county road agencies must ensure work in our jurisdictions is performed safely, does not damage our infrastructure and meets engineering standards (above/below ground), along with federal and state requirements.
- Local government and county road agencies do not profit by issuing permits, but simply recover the costs of issuing permits, making site inspections and performing related tasks. When the project is completed, funds should be reconciled with the permit holder.
- HB 5097 limits the fee to \$300 per permit or \$1000 on multiple projects. Such a "one-size-fits-all" fee does not account for the type of work planned in a rural or urban setting, nor does it consider the risks a project may pose. In general, the bills supplant engineering-based management with a "cookie-cutter" approach that puts public resources and workers at risk.
- HB 5097 limits security/bonding to \$20,000, regardless of potential risk and damage beyond that amount, rural vs. urban setting, and requires that bonds be returned within 60 days after a project is complete, even if damage is being contested.

Please consider the statewide ramifications and precedent these bills would create. While the telecommunications industry may point to isolated instances of local obstacles, it is certainly not a statewide problem.

We ask you to oppose HB 5096-5099! These bills move in the wrong direction for Michigan.

Sincerely,

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